

many rewards they are sure to receive as they watch him grow.

I welcome young Brady into the world and wish Brad and Jessica all the best as they raise him.

**SUPPORT FOR DR. HALEH
ESFANDIERI**

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, on December 30, 2006, Dr. Haleh Esfandieri, a prominent Iranian-American scholar, was in Iran to visit her sick 93-year-old mother when she was stopped by the Iranian authorities.

What followed was nearly 5 months of a series of intense interrogations and pressure tactics where she was harassed, threatened, and forced to make false statements against her employer, the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. On May 8, she was again detained and imprisoned.

Her arrest and detention has angered analysts, human rights groups and lawmakers throughout the world. Yet still, the Iranian regime refuses to release her, claiming she is a spy who was plotting to overthrow the Iranian government.

I would like to submit a statement issued from the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars on May 21, 2007 for the record.

Madam Speaker, these charges are a farce. Professor Esfandieri is an accomplished scholar of Persian literature, language and history who taught at Princeton University before becoming the Director of the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars Middle East Program. Her husband, Mr. Shaul Bakhash, is a professor at George Mason University of Fairfax, VA. The Woodrow Wilson Center is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose work is to research and foster dialogue within the scholarly world on current and future public policy issues.

Dr. Esfandieri's tireless dedication to teaching and advocating on behalf of Iran is clear. She has focused on building bridges and opening doors for peace in the Middle East. She has sought to facilitate and strengthen Iranian-American relations through numerous seminars, lectures and workshops with educators, policymakers and groups from both countries and has pressed wider freedoms to communicate about our common bonds and negotiate over our disagreements.

Like thousands of other Iranians living abroad, Professor Esfandieri is an academic who took a personal trip to see her family. If she as one individual scholar threatens this regime so much that they have to interrogate her for almost five months and detain her in a notorious prison cell known for human rights abuses, then one has to assume this regime is desperate to retain whatever control it can.

Today, the Iranian leadership's lack of courage and conscience is as clear as it is disappointing.

It is evident that this regime is criminalizing scholarly work of any kind, despite the fact that Iran's very own history is filled with centuries of scholarly research and discovery. This regime's egregious decision to imprison

Dr. Esfandieri reflects a deepening departure from the values and ideals the Iranian people have historically prided themselves on.

Iran's renowned nationalist Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq once said "There is no better way to govern Iran than democracy and social justice!"

Professor Esfandieri should be released immediately. Every day she is so unjustly detained, Iran proves the case of its detractors and makes it all the more difficult for institutions like Dr. Esfandieri's Wilson Center to treat the Iranian people with the respect that should be afforded to an historic civilization and citizenship of 70 million people.

**STATEMENT ON THE ARREST IN TEHRAN OF
HALEH ESFANDIARI, DIRECTOR OF THE WOODROW
WILSON CENTER'S MIDDLE EAST PRO-
GRAM**

Haleh Esfandieri, director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and a dual Iranian-American national, was arrested in Tehran on May 8 and incarcerated in the Evin Prison.

The background to this entirely unjustified arrest is as follows:

TIME LINE OF EVENTS

December 21, 2006, Haleh Esfandieri, director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and a dual Iranian-American national, traveled from Washington D.C. to Tehran, Iran to visit her 93-year-old mother for one week.

On December 30, 2006, on her way to the airport to catch a flight back to Washington, the taxi in which Dr. Esfandieri was riding was stopped by three masked, knife-wielding men. They threatened to kill her, and they took away all of her belongings, including her Iranian and American passports.

On January 3, when applying for replacement Iranian travel documents at the passport office, Dr. Esfandieri was invited to an "interview" by a man from Iran's Ministry of Intelligence.

Beginning on January 4, she was subjected to a series of interrogations that stretched out over the next six weeks, sometimes continuing for as many as four days a week, and sometimes stretching across seven and eight hours in a single day. Dr. Esfandieri went home every evening, but the interrogations were unpleasant and not free from intimidation and threat.

The questioning focused almost entirely on the activities and programs of the Middle East Program at the Wilson Center. Dr. Esfandieri answered all questions fully; when she could not remember details of programs stretching back five and even eight years, the staff at the Wilson Center provided her all the information requested. As a public organization, all Wilson Center activities are on the public record. Repeatedly during the interrogation, she was pressured to make a false confession or to falsely implicate the Wilson Center in activities in which it had no part, but she refused.

On Friday, January 15, in the third week of interrogations, Dr. Esfandieri was told (misleadingly as it turned out) the questioning was over. On January 18, the interrogator and three other men showed up at Dr. Esfandieri's mother's apartment. Dr. Esfandieri was taking a nap and was startled to wake up and see the door to her bedroom open, her privacy violated, and three strange men, one of them wielding a video-camera, staring into her bedroom.

On February 14, the lengthy interrogations stopped.

On February 17, Haleh received one threatening phone call, and then she did not hear

anything from her interrogators for ten weeks.

On February 20, Lee Hamilton, president and director of the Wilson Center, wrote to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad asking that Dr. Esfandieri be allowed to travel. However, President Ahmadinejad did not reply to the letter.

At the end of April or early May, she was telephoned once again and invited to "co-operate." In effect, she was being asked to make a confession. She refused to make the false statements.

On Monday, May 7 she was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence once again. When she arrived for her appointment on Tuesday morning, May 8th, she was put into a car and taken to Evin prison. She was incarcerated and was allowed only one phone call to her mother.

On May 9 she called her mother asking her to bring her clean clothes and her medicine. Her mother delivered the small package at Evin Prison on May 10, but was not allowed to see her.

On May 12, the hard-line daily "Kayhan" in an article accused Dr. Esfandieri of working with the U.S. and Israeli governments and with involvement in efforts to topple Iran's Islamic regime.

On May 15, Iranian judiciary spokesman Ali Reza Jamshidi said that Dr. Esfandieri was being investigated for crimes against national security and that her case was being handled by the Intelligence Ministry.

On May 15, Haleh made a brief telephone call to her mother.

On May 16, Haleh's family retained the legal services of Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi to represent her.

On May 17, in an interview with Washington Post Staff Writer Robin Wright, Shirin Ebadi indicated that the Iranian government has rejected her request to represent Dr. Esfandieri. She also noted the court refused information on the legal charges against Dr. Esfandieri, and denied her legal team the ability to see Haleh.

On May 21 state-run television broadcasts in Iran indicated that Haleh is being charged with seeking to topple the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Our efforts to obtain Haleh's release will continue and will be redoubled. She will be in our thoughts and prayers every day.

**TRIBUTE HONORING LIEUTENANT
MARTIN CUELLAR, JR., ON HIS
RETIREMENT**

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Martin Cuellar, Jr., on his retirement from the Texas State Department of Public Safety, where he served in law enforcement for the past 25 years.

Lieutenant Cuellar has an extensive background in criminal justice and has trained with the Webb County Basic Peace Officer Training Academy, and the Department of Public Safety Trooper Academy. He is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command and earned an Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice from Laredo Community College. His criminal justice background helped him serve as a lieutenant with the Department of Public Safety in the narcotics service as a part of the Directed Intelligence Group, and as deputy sheriff with the Webb County Sheriff's Department.